

# GRASSLAND, LIVESTOCK RESOURCES IN IOWA

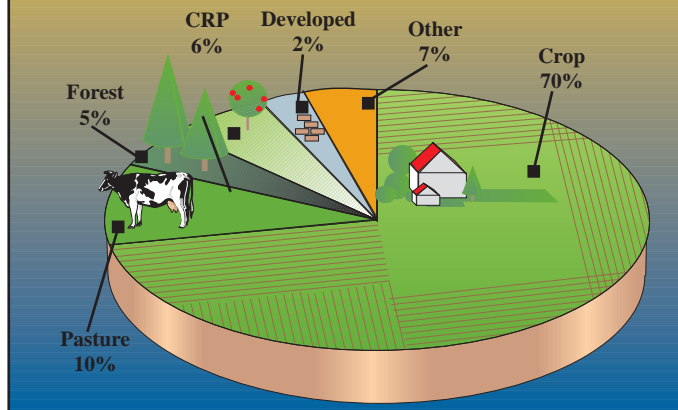
About 23 percent of Iowa's land is grass or hayland. Although hayland is often categorized as cropland, it is used primarily for livestock production and is managed differently than other crops. In Iowa, about 3.7 million acres of land are used for pasture.

In addition to pasture and hayland, in 1996, Iowa had about 2.2 million acres of land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP.) As CRP contracts expire, that land will be re-entered into CRP or converted to pasture, hay or cropland.

Using average grazing figures of \$15 per animal unit month (AUM), the value of the forage consumed by livestock in the state contributes \$111 million to the economy.

## Land use in Iowa

Nearly 1/4 of Iowa's land is grass or hayland, which includes pasture, CRP and grass on croplands.

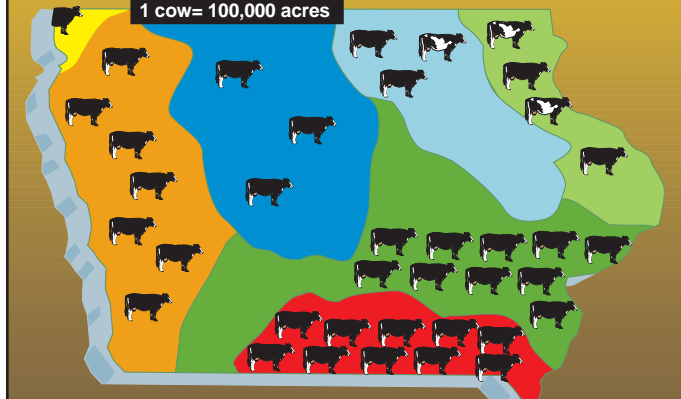


## Pastureland in Iowa

In 1992 the heaviest concentrations of pasture were in southern Iowa.

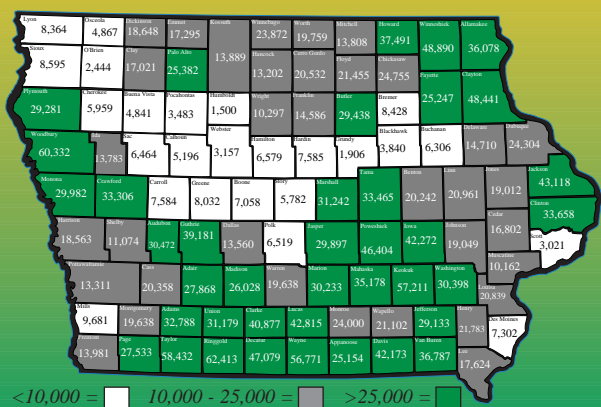
In 1992, pastures covered 10% of Iowa's land area.

1 cow = 100,000 acres



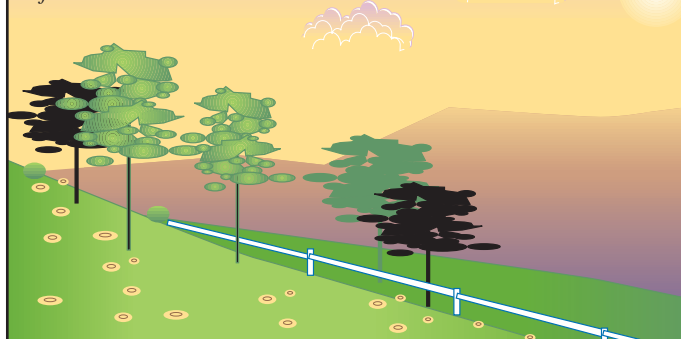
## CRP acres in Iowa, by county

In the past decade, 2.2 million acres, about 10 % of Iowa's total cropland, were enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program .



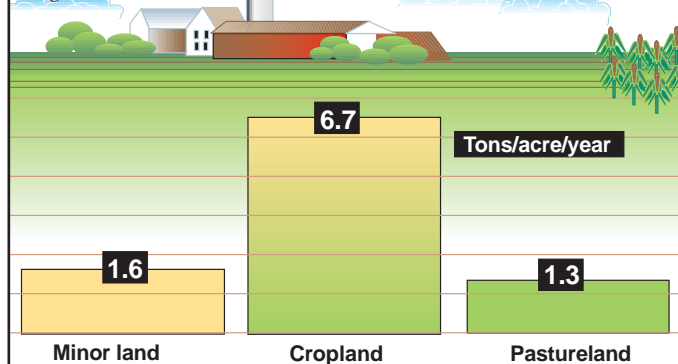
## CRP soil savings

Average soil loss on CRP land has been reduced from 18 tons/acre/year to 1 ton/acre/year, equivalent to a total savings of 36 million tons.



## Soil erosion on pastures

Soil loss rates on Iowa cropland in 1992 were 4 to 5 times higher than those on other land uses.



# ***PASTURELAND RESOURCES***

The **Natural Resources Conservation Service** has information about grazing systems and forages, and can help you improve your grazing system to meet your resource and economic goals. NRCS will help you determine if your operation is eligible for cost share. Contact your local USDA Service Center.

Your **local Soil and Water Conservation District** can help provide technical help through state programs. Some counties have cost share available for pasture systems. The Soil and Water Conservation District is located in the same office as the NRCS.

**Extension Service** has grassland and grazing specialists that will help you make a grazing system plan. Extension Service has several pamphlets on grazing and pasture management. Contact your local Extension Service office.

The **Iowa Grassland Alliance** is a voluntary effort to enhance private grasslands in Iowa. The informal group coordinates cooperation among organizations with interests in grasslands. NRCS currently facilitates the Alliance.

The **Iowa Forage and Grassland Council** is a nonprofit, educational organization of forage and livestock producers, and representatives from industry and public service sectors. Contact the Council at 900 Des Moines St., Des Moines, IA 50309.

The **Southern Iowa Forage and Livestock Committee** is a non-profit organization of local farmers, business people and USDA agencies. The Committee has demonstrated pasture and hayland as alternatives to row crop production on highly erodible land following CRP. Contact NRCS or Extension Service in Corning, Iowa.